

Kids Enjoy 2009 Chestnut Ridge Lake Fishing

June 27, 2009; 135 kids; 32 volunteers; Skill Development is Highlight

"It's all about the kids, they're all so excited," said Edna Davis, event registration supervisor. Tall kids and short kids, boys and girls, eagerly awaited their turn to "sign-in" and get started in the Family Fishing Clinic.

Everyone enjoyed the perfect 80-degree heat of a perfect Western New York summer day, learning about the outdoors at this annual Chestnut Ridge Park Lake family event.

The kids took a solid fishing lesson from Bob

Carlson, Russ Johnson and Norby Antonik, as



they learned how to craft the strong, but easy-to-tie, Palomar knot.

Next stop was with Tom Meyers, Ron Smith and Jared Smith, demonstrated step-by-step skill-forming lessons to help kids learn how to "plunk" their casting plugs into small hula-hoop targets time after time. Ron Smith reported, "the kids really "get



good" in short order!"

At the Western New York Bassmasters, kids discovered how-to rig a plastic worm, a plastic jig tail and how to fish with an artificial bait. No mess, no fuss! Mom's liked this stop!

Perhaps the most educational stop on the 4-learning station tour for the kids was the visit to the NYS-DEC "Fish and Fauna" tent. Fishery Biologists Mike Wilkinson and Mike Todd explained the "Circle of Life" for several fish

species, as well frogs, salamanders, dragonflies and other pond critters. Mike Todd said, "the kids had a million good questions!"

After completing the skill development stations, the kids could rent (for free), a rod/reel rig all set up for immediate fishing fun with a nifty slip-bobber. Tom Fischer and Don Davis made sure these rigs were "ready to fly" when the kids arrived.

Right next door was the "Bait Station" where kids received a fresh supply of night-crawlers, as over 1,000 worms was

donated by Weekley's Bait Shop from Hamburg,

New York. Mike Smith made sure every kid had a plenty of bait-rigging and fish-catching instructions at that stop! Among the busiest places for the kids was the "Lunker Pool". A 6-foot swimming pool filled with pond water, complete with a battery-operated aerator, allowed kids competing in the contest for biggest and smallest fish to watch the assorted finny critters swim after they were "weighed in". After the event, all of the fish were



released alive back into the pond, with the kids that did not catch a fish, first in line. Conservation at every level!

Pete Quagliana and Don Nikischer were "busy, recording over 160 fish caught by the kids, though over





500 fish were estimated to be caught in the two-hour fishing event. There was a two-way tie for the winner of the big-fish contest, with Justin Jaracz and Ian Cashdollar, bringing in a 13-1/2 inch largemouth bass each. The smallest fish was caught by a happy Kara Perry, with a four-



inch sunfish. The "big and little" winners were each awarded a premium rod/reel outfit for their trophy efforts.

Over the course of the fishing day, Chuck Godfrey, Mike Smith, Joe Fischer, Spencer Schofield offered on-site fishing lessons as families fished on the lake trails.



The Hawkeye bowmen kept the charcoal-grilled Sahlen's hot dog line moving fast enough to keep the kids coming back for succulent seconds. Kids loves



hot dogs!

A rousing round of applause sang through the air, as the crowd thanked the volunteers for the great day. Thanks to Pure Fishing, Northern King Lures, Will Elliott of the Buffalo news, the Erie County Federation of Sportsmen and Erie County Fish Advisory Board volunteers who helped the kids learn more about how to have fun in the outdoors through fishing.



Special official thanks to Bass Pro, Scott Gauld, who displayed his professional fishing boat rig for visitors, and to Legislator Tim Wroblewski who provided a \$150 check to pay for rental of the park event. Thanks to Joe McAdams for event pictures to be found at

<http://www.eriectyfsc.org/2009events.html>.



Thanks TEAM!

Dave Barus 2009 Federation coordinator

Mike Todd 2009 NYSDEC coordinator